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Pulpit

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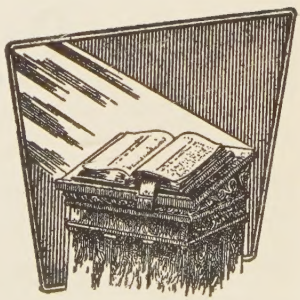

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

"The Lord's Treasury," this month's first theme, features sermons on stewardship which are especially concerned with Christian giving. The second theme, "Modern Pilgrims Give Thanks," highlights the message of Thanksgiving Sunday.

Next month's emphasis will be "The Deeper Meanings of Christmas," and the December themes will be "Our Lord's Parables" and "Month of Beginnings,'" sermons for the New Year.

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

A Book of Public Prayers by Harry Emerson Fosdick is a collection of 75 general and special — occasion prayers and litanies written for use in the pulpit of The Riverside Church. Many readers will agree that this is the most distinguished anthology of prayers by a single individual to be published during this generation. (Harper & Brothers, 191 pp., $3)

Two books have been published by contributors to **Pulpit Preaching**. The first, **Values in the Church Year for Evangelical Protestantism** by William F. Dunkle, Jr., contains the story and meaning of the church year, texts and sermonic suggestions for the individual days, and a fascinating commentary on the author's experiences in developing in his worship and preaching the testimony of the Christian year. Few readers will be left unmoved by the significance and potential values (Abingdon, 144 pp., $2.50)

(Continued on page 21)

WORTH QUOTING

E. Paul Hovey
The Federated Churches
Lewiston, Idaho

We have long made sport of the way Orientals save face. Yet, it might be to our advantage to count the high cost of face saving which all of us practice. We give it a different name — we call it "saving our pride," but spiritually and psychologically with us it is a determination to keep up pretense.

One of the most common forms of our kind of face saying is the effort we make to keep up with the Joneses. We spend more than we can afford, we subject ourselves to practices we dislike, we offend our inner sense of right and wrong, we read books that disgust us — all for the sake of basking in the approval of other people. . .

Often in their own minds people are ashamed of their surrender. The fact that they compromised with a conviction hurts them and undermines their spiritual strength. They manage to save face with their crowd, but they lose respect for themselves. — Roy L. Smith

° ° °

I know it is better to do right than wrong. By whatever standards we make this distinction the evildoer provides problems rather than solutions for himself and the society of which he is a part. The Bible is full of illustrations of this. The value of the good life is an idea like an unbroken thread drawn from Genesis

(Continued on page 17)

Pulpit Preaching

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THE LORD'S TREASURY

HE NILE IS MINE

Wesley P. Ford, Central Christian Church, Pasadena, California

The Valley of the Nile is some-nes called the cradle of civilization r there are found evidences of anc-nt community life. The Nile makes r a rich delta region which has giv- life to its inhabitants across thou-nds of years. Without the seasonal w of the river bringing fertility, e valley would lose its productivity. ne fact that this area is now a part a land in conflict is not new. ouble arose early along the Nile. en who came as wanderers settled d were able to remain because of e gifts of the river. Here was a life-ving valley to bless its settlers. But th the passing of time, men forgot e gifts of the Nile and took credit themselves for their ability.

The Hebrew prophet Ezekiel points the pride and haughtiness of the yptians when he opposed an alli-ce with them, "Because you say, ne Nile is mine and I made it." e prophet was certain that desola-n was ahead for these who had rgotten the Lordship and owner-p of God so completely that they re boasting, "The Nile is mine." e, too, readily forget. Even where r ancestors planted seed and trust- God for sunshine and rain, we are ick to say, "This is mine; I did it."

In contrast to those who took credit the Nile is the early history of the brew people. As these sought to t together the story of their lives, ir first note was, "In the beginning d . . ." Their nation began under ram who went out from his own me under the guidance of God. hen he stopped on the desert he ilt an altar to the Lord, for the Lord had protected him, and for himself pitched a tent. Early in its life the young nation was saying, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.'" "Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us and we are his."

Because, instead of saying, "The Nile is mine," the Hebrews said, "The earth is the Lord's," they built altars wherever they stopped and to the altars brought the first fruits of their land. Their custom was to set aside the first 10 percent of their produce and to dedicate it as the Lord's portion. One of their laws said: "All the tithe of the land is the Lord's. It is holy to the Lord."

Here then are insights into two ancient communities, one abundantly blessed by the rich, flowing waters of the Nile. Early its leaders were saying, "The Nile is mine." In contrast the Hebrews were wanderers over the desert. They were without a rich river valley. But wherever they stopped they were singing, "The earth is the Lord's." And out of abundance or out of poverty the first tenth was the Lord's because everything was his.

I

Note three limitations of the first philosophy. When a person is unwilling to acknowledge that God is the giver of life then he must establish false gods. Every life finally pledges allegiance, if not to the God of all then to some lesser or false deity. Generally one substitutes the worship of a nation or of himself. Such idols are always limited and lead immediately to conflict and often to war.

Secondly, when one will not ac-

knowledge God's ownership he runs out of answers for life's pressing questions. What about pain? What about sin? What about death? It is such questions as these that drive persons insane. The Prodigal Son thought he had all the answers, so he left home. But finally, up against it and in misery, he came to himself, and when he came to himself, to his right mind, he returned to his father and begged for the privilege of being a servant. He had left home wanting to be the owner; he returned seeking the highest privilege, that of being a servant.

The third and most obvious limitation of this philosophy is that without the acknowledgement of our dependence upon God there is no security. We substitute things and things let us down, so we witness the failure of successful men. There is a parable of life in the pioneer Donner party. James Reed and George Donner were probably the most wealthy to begin the trip to California. The snow which created their death trap came during what was to have been their last night in the mountains. They were just one day late! Part of the delay was caused by the palace car of James Reed. It was a luxury wagon with a built-in stove, private inner compartment, top deck, and a basement floor — more luxurious, wider, and heavier than any wagon ever to set out on the trail. And George Donner had $10,000 in bills stitched inside a quilt. Members of this pioneer party who starved and froze to death payed a terrific price in discovering the futility of things. Ownership of things is not security.

II

Consider now the merits of the philosophy which recognizes that all things are God's. Such immediately establishes life as a creative enterprise not wholly dependent upon one's own efforts for each now has the backing of God. The Hebrews who developed the principle of the tithe believed that as they dedicated God's portion he in turn blessed their portion. So all of life became an adventure. And when one enters into partnership with God he never knows defeat, only delay.

There are still those who argue against the tithe, but they are unwilling to try it. Here is not only adventure; here, too, is found security. When one brings regularly God's portion he becomes increasingly God's person. "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also." Here is the only kind of security that can cure ulcers. Relying upon things never satisfies, for there is always the fear of more need. "And what is fear of need but need itself."

Further, the acknowledgement of God's ownership with the principle of the tithe opens the door to an expression of gratitude. When one brings God's portion he wants to sing for God is ever good! Such gratitude is the source of our hymn singing. The Psalms were hymns of praise used by those who said, "The earth is the Lord's and we are his." To set aside a portion is to become aware of God's goodness.

And while some argue against God's ownership and the tithe, I am reminded of one historical event. In the fullness of time God sent His son. Why was this child cradled in a Jewish stable manger? Why did not God use the ancient Egyptian society? And there were Greeks with keen minds and marble temples; and there were the Romans with great empires and conquering armies. In contrast to ancient Egypt with its Nile and pyramids, to Greece with philosophers and temples, to Rome with palaces and armies, was the Jewish community beaten and pushed about. No claim to fame had these except that they believed that God was the creator and giver of all life and that they were his. Among all the people on earth this handful of wanderers was saying, "This is God's world." And through these who built an altar to the Lord and brought the

st fruits regularly, the Christ was rn. This was God's choice in history d it is the greatest single argument behalf of stewardship and the he! God blessed humanity most rough those who said, "All is the rd's."

III

What of ourselves? We must choose tween the philosophy which says, he Nile is mine," or that which s, "The earth is the Lord's." More portant than who we are is whose are. By our Christian tradition we cept the Hebrew heritage. And by e redemptive acts of Christ we are de eternal debtors. But we forget. mands are heavy upon us, so we ect stewardship. But stewardship's jor concern is not what we do with r own but what we do with God's. e cannot talk about giving of our n until we have become stewards God's portion. If God does not ve some claim upon material things trusted to us, than what is God's? ould you limit God's jurisdiction w to the trees and the birds?

What is the major tragedy of our ne? It is the number of Christians o live by the pagan philosophy ing, "The Nile is mine," instead by the Christian philosophy say- g, "The earth is the Lord's."

But people say costs are up. Surely ey are. So are the costs of Kingdom terprises. I discover an increasing mber of folk saying they cannot ve as much to the church, for taxes e so high, which is a greedy way saying that we expect God to pay r taxes. Jesus said, "Render unto esar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." He did not say "Pay Caesar out of God's portion." If costs are up it is because of the abundance of God's blessings. What more can God do than He has done? It would be a poor parent who encouraged his son to assume less responsibility for the household because his personal economic standards were so much higher. "When I was a child I spoke like a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things." God has done His part; some responsibilities are mine.

The two philosophies are as old as human society. One says, "The Nile is mine." The other says, "The earth is the Lord's." God, in the sending of His son, chose the latter. And the acknowledgement of God's ownership and the responsibility of man's stewardship became the way of life for the Christians. Immediately there was conflict. And these who lived by self-sacrifice believed they were living like God, for God had become the great giver and the fulfillment of life's highest hope. Even as good stewards we do not match what God has done. We know "the good news that what God promises to the fathers, this He has fulfilled to us."

Jesus told a parable in which the owner of the land summoned his stewardship and said, "Turn in the account of your stewardship." Do we not all face that judgment? The steward in turn went hurriedly among the debtors asking each, "How much do you owe my Lord?" Is it a fair question? From whence do our blessings come? Whose is the Nile?

ETTING OUR MONEY'S WORTH

Ralph W. Sockman, Christ Church, New York, New York

No subject is more discussed in our ery-day circles than the rising cost living. I should like to think with u about what we are getting for e money we spend.

If there is any person who thinks this is a theme inappropriate to a service of worship, may I remind you how much Our Lord himself talked about money. Jesus appeared utterly indifferent to money for his own use. There is no mention of what he earn-

ed as a carpenter, of what he received as a teacher, of what he spent as a traveler. He is never recorded as taking up a collection and the gospels contain no treasurer's report.

Yet while Jesus seemed free from any personal concern about money, there is scarcely any subject to which he made more frequent reference. Realist that he was, he recognized how closely monetary considerations are woven into every-day living. Life is an exchange, a giving and a getting, and money is a measure of exchange.

In the sixth century before Christ, Jerusalem had been captured and many of its people had been carried captive to Babylon. These transplanted Jews began to take root in the business and social life of Babylon. They prospered and settled down. Hence when permission was given to return to Jerusalem, many of them preferred to remain in the comfortable circles of Babylon rather than to go back and help restore Zion. Isaiah in his fifty-fifth chapter is appealing to these Jewish emigres to leave the life of Babylon and keep their covenant with God in Jerusalem. And he passionately asks: "Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?"

In that mid-eastern region bread was the basic element of physical diet. And the Biblical writers used the word "bread" as the symbol of life's essential sustenance. Hence Isaiah is asking his fellow countrymen why they spend their money and yet miss what is most worth getting. His question is as pertinent to Chicago, Toronto, Miami and St. Louis as it was to Babylon. Can God help us to spend our money wisely and without waste?

I

For one thing, God guides us in determining what we want to get. In planning the spending of our money and our lives we need an over-all guiding purpose. We are not wise in setting out into life with no more definite purpose than a person might start out to do a day's Christmas shopping. A woman may go out to buy presents for her family and friends. She has a list of those for whom she wants to get something. She may have a pretty clear idea of how much she is going to spend. But she walks along the streets and through the shops watching for something to catch her eye. That policy may work fairly well in finding gifts for one's friends — although we sometimes wonder how some gifts we receive did happen to catch the eye of the shopper! But successful as the practice may be for a day's shopping, it is not adequate for a life's planning.

When we start out to spend life, we need a guiding purpose and goal. The objective which we have in our mind's eye determines so largely the objects that catch our eye. When a young fellow comes to New York City "to see life," the kind of life he sees depends on what kind of life he is looking for. He may find here the indulgences and dives which waste his money and stain his character. Or he may find here the business opportunities, the artistic incentives, the spiritual inspiration, which enlarge and enrich his life. This power of an inner purpose, and outlook to condition what we see and do was forcefully expressed by John Milton: "The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."

And Jesus applied this power of a directing purpose to spending and buying. He bade his hearers not to be worried and fretful about how they could get the material possessions they wanted. He said: "Do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or what shall we wear?' But seek first (God's) Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

As I understand Our Lord here, he was not telling us just to be good and sit back and pray and God will pro

ide us with sufficient supplies for ur own bodily needs. To seek the ingdom of God is not to sit back, ut to work earnestly for God. And we give God's purposes priority n our lives, our material needs will all into proper place and we shall ind ways of meeting them.

Some years ago when the school hildren of France took a poll as to what Frenchman had done the most or their country in all its history, whom did they choose? The most otes went not to Napoleon who for time made France master of Eupe, but to Louis Pasteur, the scientst. His name has become a household ord, even through the milk we rink. His was a long and lonely truggle against stupidity, pride and rofessional jealousy. When at last he as elected to the French Academy, e revealed in his inaugural address ne of the secrets of the strength hich sustained him on his hard road victory. He opened his heart in hese words: "Blessed is he who caries within himself a God, an ideal, nd who obeys it; ideal of art, ideal f science, ideal of the gospel virtues: herein lie the springs of great houghts and great actions."

If we are to get our money's worth n life, we must start with a godly urpose and with God's priorities. Ve do not know how much money e shall have at the end of 1959 or ven what the dollar will be worth. Many a youth does not know what he ants to do in life and none of our oung people know what they may e doing a year from now. But there s one thing which all of us, whether oung or old, can decide on right ow and that is, what kind of a person he wants to be a year from now r forty years from now. First of all, herefore, ask God to guide us now in what kind of life we want to get with he money and labor we have to pend.

II

Secondly, God guides us in the alues of what we want. Last summer I had occasion to spend a half hour in a Paris shop while my wife was making a purchase in another department of the store. I watched two women shopping at the same counter. One was an American tourist; the other was a Parisian resident. Both knew what they wanted. The American woman, however, was trying to translate French francs into American dollars and to compute what she would have to pay for the article in New York. The woman of Paris had a better knowledge of values. She knew what the article should cost in comparison with other prices in Paris. I observed that the French woman was getting more discriminating attention from the salesgirl and was driving the better bargain.

So in life, it is not enough to know what we want; we should know its value. Christ helps his followers to know values. Without Christ's help we are so prone to rate things by their market price or by their popular appeal. Take a simple illustration. Suppose a woman wears a new hat to church today, and the first six persons she meets after the service were to say: "My dear, why did you buy it?" Of course they wouldn't say that. But they might look it. After a half dozen persons had looked as if they were saying that, I venture to think that the hat would not have much worth in her own sight.

Thus we form our ideas of value so largely by what others think. We measure things not by their intrinsic worth but by what others are willing to pay for them. Thus we pursue the pleasures that are in vogue, seek the power that is admired, and crave the money that can buy the things we want because others want them too.

If we are to discover a true sense of values we must view them in the light of God's appraisal rather than man's. In the small Ohio city where I as a boy bought my clothes, the men's furnishings store did not have very good lighting. The overhanging electric bulbs being rather inad-

equate, the salesman would often tell us to take the garment to the door and see it in the sunlight. Christ counseled men on somewhat the same principle. He bade them look at the things they had and wanted in the sunlight of God by viewing them at the door by which they entered life.

Recall how Jesus once set a child in the midst of the crowd and said, "Unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Little children have not much sense of market values, but they have an almost uncanny sense of character values. A child can detect the false notes in a grown-up. Boys recognize the genuineness, the courage, the strength in character. Christ, therefore, would have us take our desires, our tastes, our ambitions back to the door of our childhood and see how they look in the light of innocence and simplicity, see whether we have lost something of the wholesomeness and integrity of our childhood.

III

And Christ would have us test our values not only by what the unspoiled insight of childhood thinks is good but also by what is good for children. In a good home parents are governed in their spending and in the whole conduct of life by what is good for the children. And so is it with a nation. One wholesome aspect of American life has been its traditional interest in the training of youth. Up to the First World War, education was called "the American passion." We spent more on it than on any other public item in our governmental budgets. Two world wars have changed all this. Defense items now dwarf all other governmental expenditures.

And the training of our youth has suffered from our gigantic spending not only for weapons but also on other things. Eleven years ago Benjamin Fine, education editor of the New York Times completed a six-month's nation-wide survey of our schools and colleges, and wrote a book entitled, "Our Children Are Cheated." After reading Fine's book one reviewer wrote that we as a nation are willing to spend more than three times as much per year on liquor as on education. This seems to us indicative of a curiously inverted sense of values. As individuals, as families and as nations, it behooves us to look at our budgets in the sunlight of God as it streams in through the door of childhood. What is good for the children is good to God.

IV

Also, Our Lord bade us test the value of our purchases and possessions by looking at them in the light of the door by which we leave this world. He told of the wealthy farmer who was planning larger barns for his growing harvests. Feeling his future to be secure, the farmer said to his soul, "Take your ease, eat, drink, be merry." But God said to him: "Fool, this night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" Then Jesus added this comment: "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

If we spend our money and labor only for our own interests, we are likely to become fed up or dried up even before we die. And if we spend ourselves only for material things which our physical senses can enjoy, we shall not get our money's worth, because death will take them from us.

But if we spend our money and labor for things that enrich the mind and ennoble character we can take them with us because personality survives the grave. And if we spend our money for good causes like education and missions and world peace, then we shall get our money's worth because we are investing it in things which carry on our work and make us rich toward God.

Hear the testimony of a man who came from a good family, presumably affluent. He might have spent his

oney for the material possessions hich we call "the good things of e." But he spent his time and labor seeking what he considered the od things of eternal life through rving the cause of Christ As this teran investor stood at the door of life's exit, he declared: "I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and I am sure that he is able to guard until that Day what I have entrusted to him."

St. Paul felt he had gotten the worth of his money.

O LIVE IS TO GIVE

J. R. Brokhoff, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Charlotte, North Carolina

"Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go sell what you possess and give to the poor, you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Matthew 19:16, 21.

Look at my hand! It is closed. If u wanted to give me something I uld not accept it. At the same time ould not give you anything. Better an reecive or give, my hand must en. This is one of the fundamental inciples of life: to live is to give.

This is a divine law. It is written o the constitution of creation. Take seed. If it remains by itself, it can- t produce a flower or fruit. It must ve itself by being buried in the ound. Then it produces.

Notice the principle in your breath- g. To live is to breathe. But breath- g means exhaling as well as inhal- g. If you wanted to be selfish and ke only what the world could give u and not give anything in return, u would die. Try it. Take a breath. not exhale. Take another breath. w another. How do you feel? You e about to burst. That is exactly at would happen if you tried only inhale without exhaling. The two together. To live is to give.

Look about the landscape and you e the same principle applied. The es that are fresh and teeming with h are bodies of water that have outlet as well as an intake. This well illustrated in the two seas of lestine. The Sea of Galilee is a sh-water lake and has much fish. any make their living on the sea hing. It has an inlet and an outlet. e Dead Sea receives the water of e Jordan river but it has no outlet. What is the result? Nothing can live in it. It is too salty and briny.

What is true in nature is true with a life or soul. Jesus said, "Give and it shall be given unto you." Again, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Paul put it, "Sow sparingly and you will reap sparingly; sow bountifully and you will reap bountifully." The principle can be seen in the lives of two men who came to Jesus. The one was a rich young ruler who came asking how he could get eternal life. He was told to obey the commandments. He told Jesus that he obeyed them from his youth. Then Jesus put his finger on the key to the problem and told him to sell all and give to the poor. The young man left Jesus with dejected spirit and lowered head because he could not make the sacrifice. When he walked away from Christ, he walked away from life. He did not live because he did not give.

The other man was up a sycamore tree to see Jesus and his followers pass by. Jesus called to Zaccheus to come down. He did and took Jesus to his home where he gave the Master a banquet. At the close of the happy occasion, Zaccheus announced to Jesus that half of his goods he would give to the poor and if he took anything dishonestly from a person, he would not only restore it but would give back four times what he took. Jesus told these around him, "Today

salvation has come to this house." Salvation — life — came to Zaccheus not because he gave a great confession of faith as Peter did at Caesarea Philippi, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"; Zaccheus did not perform any might act, like Peter, in trying to walk on the water. Zaccheus gained life because he gave not the usual tithe but a half of his goods. He lived because he gave.

There is the principle: to live is to give. It is written in the very nature of things and people. It is God's law. How does this principle apply?

I

First, we ourselves live because we give. If we do not give, we shall die, both physically and spiritually. Physical death often comes to those who are most eager in getting as much of the world's goods as possible. Chaucer tells of three young men who were out for a good time. They met an old man and roughed him up demanding that he tell them where they can find Death. The man tells them they will find Death under the oak tree yonder. The young men see the tree as they go down the road. For fun they stop and to their amazement they find a pile of gold, a fortune. In order to celebrate two of them send the youngest to town to get some bread and wine. When he is gone, the two ask, "Why should we divide the treasure in three ways when it could be divided half and half?" They plot for the one to wrestle with the youngest and the other would drive a dagger in his back. While the youngest was buying the provisions he goes to buy some poison to kill some rats he knows. He thinks, "Why should I divide the treasure with the other two when I can have it all to myself?" He buys the poison and puts it in the two bottles of wine. When he returns, the wrestling and killing take place according to the plans. Then the remaining two sit down and drink the poisoned wine. In a short time three dead bodies are with the gold. To get money men will go to the length of murder and crime.

Spiritual death comes to those who live only for gold. Jesus told about a man who got rich. He built his barns and was ready to retire saying, "Take it easy. Eat, drink, and be merry." But that very night his soul was required of him. He gained the world but lost his soul. There are many people doing just that today. They neglect the spiritual things of life for the sake of material comforts and conveniences.

Death comes not only in getting riches, but in trying to keep all you have. Some of us are stingy and selfish. We are afraid to give a dollar for a good cause. We love our money so much we will not spend it. J. C. Penny tells in his autobiography about the cause of his wife's death. Thep had planned a trip, but Mrs. Penny first needed a minor operation. He had a business trip to make before they went on the journey. She insisted that he go on the trip while she went to the hospital. Then they could take their journey on schedule. While he was out of town, she had her operation. On the day she was released from the hospital, it was stormy, cold, and raining. To save the taxi fare, she walked home in the miserable weather. She took cold, later pneumonia, and then died. For the sake of saving the price of a taxi ride she gave up her life. What a powerful lesson that is to us who pinch pennies at the price of human welfare!

Not to give means death. The positive side is equally true: to give is to live. We live as we give. Giving means life for the soul; it is more important for us to give than it is for others to receive. For this reason Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Each time we give we grow inside. As we give, we become big and noble. We get out of ourselves. We curb our natural selfishness and stinginess. A father took his boy to a blacksmith shop to pick up a hoe and rake he had repaired

He took out a silver dollar to pay the blacksmith. The smithy did not want any pay. The man insisted that he pay him. Finally the blacksmith said, "Sid, why can't you let a man do something for you to stretch his own soul?" That is what giving does for the soul—it stretches it into something bigger and more worthwhile.

At the same time giving makes you a part of the world around you. Ruby Kerman says one year she decided she would not give a cent to any charity or cause. She was through with giving. By the end of the year she said she found that while the charities needed her help, she needed the charities more than they needed her. She had become a solitary figure, living within her own little selfish world. She had no interest or concern for people around her. To live she needed to be in relation with the poor and needy around her. She could not be an island all to herself. That is true with each of us. Giving puts us into contact with the world around us. We need them for a fuller life more than they need us. Giving puts us into their lives and we live in them.

Giving is good for us also because it helps us overcome the materialism of our age. Day by day we deal with the material things of life: money, houses, bonds, stocks, prices of this and that. We discuss money and often quarrel over the spending of our money. How many times a day do you talk about money or material things? Giving helps us to take ourselves out of this materialistic world. When we give, we express our interest and faith in the non-material world. We invest in human and spiritual values.

Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." To the rich ruler, he said, "And you shall have treasure in heaven." It is a fact that where our treasure is, there is our main interest. If it is in bonds and houses and cars and conveniences, there is where our hearts are. If we put our money on the altar, we shall put our hearts there with it. If we lay our tithes and offerings at the feet of Jesus, our hearts will be there, too. If we give to Christ and His cause, we shall lay up treasure in heaven. There our hearts will be for all eternity. There it is — to live is to give. To the extent we give, we shall live. Give sparingly and live sparingly. Give bountifully and live bountifully both here and in heaven.

II

To live is to give. A second application shows us that others live because we give. People physically live today only because some give. There are the poor who depend upon welfare payments. The orphans need homes. The aged need care. The refugees need food and clothing. Since the last war Lutherans of America have given 100 million for relief to the dispossessed overseas. It can be truly and magnificently said that probably millions are alive this minute because we gave during these past years. Today 30,000 refugees and DPs are in this country because Lutherans gave to provide them transportation and to pay the necessary administrative expenses. Now they are here. They have a new home, live in the most wonderful country in the world, and are able to begin anew life. They live because we gave.

It is wonderful what money can do to bring health and life to people. Studdert-Kennedy tells of visiting a womon sick with tuberculosis. While visiting her, the doctor came. Later he asked him if she had a chance. The doctor said , "Not, if she stays here." It was true that the one-room home was in the slums where there was dire poverty, darkness, and dampness. "How much would it take to get her well?" "Thirty pounds." Studdert Kennedy went out and raised it. It meant a taxi to take her to a fine railroad carriage. It meant a home overlooking the sea. It provided a patient nurse and a wise doctor. All of that plus renewed health and

strength for the paltryy sum of 30 pounds! It is truly wonderful how our giving can enable others to live.

The money we have can be the source of a great life for people who now are in misery. It can bring joy and relief from worry and fear. One day a man passed a boy with his head in his arms leaning against a tree. He was sobbing for all he was worth. The man asked what terrible thing happened that he be crying like that. He said that he lost the dime his father gave him to go to the store and buy a little to eat. His family was so very poor that he could not afford to lose the dime. He was afraid to go home. The man reached in his pocket and gave the lad a dime. Soon the tears stopped. A light came into his eyes. Soon he was thanking the man. H ran to the store and took home the food. What happiness was wrought for only one thin dime! Money when used to bring joy is a blessed thing. It permits people to live.

Others live spiritually also because we give. This may be hard for some people to understand. It takes money to bring spiritual life to people. It costs to win souls. The Church saves as many souls as it has the money to do it. It is as simple and as business-like as that.

Christ gave the Church the commission to win the world for Him by preaching the gospel to every creature. It costs money to send missionaries. They must eat and have a h o m e. Transportation to distant points is expensive. Mission stations must be built. To maintain the 278 missionaries of our Church it takes a million dollars a year. Quite a figure, isn't it?

We believe in planting missions in America to win the 40% not in a church. We are all for it until it comes to giving money to establish missions. Did you know that it costs $75,000 to plant one mission in America? To plant the 90 missions in our country last year it required an investment of almost 2 million dollars. More could have been planted, but the funds ran out.

Today we are faced with a glorious opportunity to spread the gospel by mass communication: radio and TV. Though stations may give free time, it costs to prepare programs. The TV religious program, "This is the Life," costs our Missouri Synod brethren $750,000 each year.

It gets down to this basic question: how much is a soul worth? Is it worth a tenth of your income? Or one percent? Or like Zaccheus, half of your wealth? If a soul is worth more than the universe, is it worth a sacrificial gift to save that soul for eternal life in and through Christ? When you make your pledge this year, ask yourself how much the winning of one soul is worth. It ought to make a difference.

Do you want to live? Of course, you do. Who doesn't? You want right now life that is abundant and victorious. When you close your eyelids in death, you want more than anything the confidence that you will live in joy and peace throughout eternity. That life you want is in Christ. You come to him like the rich young ruler did. You ask how you might get life eternal. He tells you to give in order to live. Give how much? He would in some cases say as he did to the rich ruler, "Give all." To others he may say, "A tithe." To others, he would urge more than a tithe until it became sacrificial.

You like the rich ruler may not care for that answer. It would cost too much to be a Christian. You feel like a certain business man who complained that all he hears in church is giving. He said, "Christianity is nothing more than give, give, give." The pastor answered, "Thank you for the best definition of Christianity I've heard in a long time."

The heart of Christianity is Christ He says, "To live to give." Would you live? Then give!

WE KEEP WHAT WE GIVE

Homer J. R. Elford, Trinity Methodist Church, Youngstown, Ohio

Who gives himself with his alms
Feeds three.
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me.

Mr. Olinger was a mortician. His business had been very successful. Little by little he acquired funeral homes all over the city of Denver. He was wealthy beyond the limit of his fondest dreams. Now he could be comfortable and secure because his income had skyrocketed to fantastic heights. It was not enough, however, for him to be weathly, influential and highly respected. He began to feel the responsibility of his stewardship.

Many boys from underprivileged sections of Denver needed a program of activities and assistance which would save them from their environment. Mr. Olinger put thousands of dollars into this work and founded the Highlander Boys Organization. That was but the beginning, for he enlisted the interest and support of service clubs until he had set up and equipped a number of parks and playgrounds for both boys and girls.

The friends of Mr. Olinger chided him for his generosity. They reminded him that " a fool and his money are soon parted." His only reply was that he felt an obligation to invest of his time, his ability, and his material substance for the benefit of mankind. But then came the depression of the early 1930's. Customers could not pay their bills. Financial aid and assistance saved many businesses, but not this man's. He saw his firms pass into the hands of unscrupulous associates. Now he was penniless. Many people said, "We told you so," but that was not the end for George Olinger, because he saw that his depression-ridden community needed someone with understanding and compassion to manage the parks and playgrounds he had given. The Highlander Boys were without a shepherd. Denver turned to this man and asked him to carry on the activities of which he had been so much a part.

Near the close of his life a monument was erected to George Olinger in one of the parks which he had established. It was a monument to a great humanitarian, philosopher and friend. As he stood at the dedication ceremonies, deeply touched with a heart filled to overflowing, he said in a quavering voice, "I saved only that which I gave away."

We keep what we give. This is the secret known by those who find real joy in being alive in a world which is governed by a Heavenly Father who Himself keeps only what He gives to His children. Looking at the world of nature we see many illustrations of this law. The plants need carbon dioxide in order to keep alive, so they give off oxygen to animals which return to the air carbon dioxide which the plants need for their survival. People must recognize the necessity of joining the company of givers if they are to be a part of the company of receivers. We all receive the benefits of life in a society where God has made us dependent upon one another; therefore, we must acknowledge our neighbor's dependence upon us for his welfare and happiness. Like Mr. Olinger of Denver, we must learn that the only permanent securities are those which we develop by our investment of time, abilities and material substance in the very lives of the society of which we are a part.

One of the places where people have been discovering the truth of this philosophy is in their relationship to the church of Jesus Christ. In this country the church depends entirely upon the voluntary support

of its members. The strength of the church in America attests to the validity of this system. A prominent laymen whom I knew in another state, suddenly increased his investment in the church from $3.00 a week to $20.00 a week. He explained his action by saying that he had just returned from a trip to Europe where he had attended Easter Services in a very beautiful Protestant Cathedral. To his amazement he found only a very few people in attendance even though the music and the sermon indicated good leadership. He discovered that no one in that community was ever given an opportunity to give anything to the church. All financial needs were cared for by a grant from the government. This layman said, "I don't want that to happen here and my voluntary support of the church is my way of seeing to it that the church remains strong." He knew that we keep what we give. It becomes a part of the permanent goods which outlasts all time and circumstances.

The Every Member Canvass is a time for reviewing the basic principle of Christian stewardship which states that "God is the sovereign owner of all things, man is a steward. God's ownership and man's stewardship ought to be acknowledged through proportionate giving to the church." This is the time when each member of the church comes face to face with the question, "What is my fair share of responsibility for seeing to it that my church is provided with sufficient financial resources for ministering to me, to my children, to my friends and throughout the world?"

Speaking very practically, in answer to the question, "Just how much should our family invest in the church?" we are holding up the goal of $1.00 per week per family for every $1,000 of annual take-home pay. This amounts to approximately five per-cent of the take-home pay, or one-half of the Biblical tithe, leaving the other half of the tithe for other causes which make appeals to those who have a genuine concern for community and world betterment. One dollar per week for every $1,000 of annual take-home pay may represent the combined pledges from both adults and children, and will serve as a good start toward showing that the family wants to make a real investment in the greatest institution in the world. Inasmuch as all of us benefit from the ministry and fellowship of the church, all of us should feel it our blessed privilege to support Christ's church. As we make these considerations the subject of prayer and careful planning we may be assured that God will continue to bless us and help us really to keep, forever, that which we give to Him with a joyful heart.

HE WHO CAME BACK

Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

> And he fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. Luke 17:16.

We might entitle this sermon "How To Be Wealthy" or again we might call it "The Price of Value." Before an individual can begin to find faith he must discover a hierarchy of values. He must distinguish between the cheap and the valuable. He must sharpen his taste; learn the worth of things. A child develops faith in his legs by learning the value of placing them on something solid where he will not slip or stumble. He learns this valuable fact by tumbling, falling, hurting himself many times. A sailing companion and I were discussing the laws of navigation and the

principles of good sportsmanship which some sailors tend to scorn. He said: "As you get older you learn to appreciate the value of rules. Then you become a good sailor. It is just like learning to appreciate the value of the Good Book. It gives you the faith to live."

One of our staff members called upon a young couple who had a baby baptized. They too had promised "by precept and example to lead their child to the love of God and the service of our Lord Jesus Christ." When she called as a representative of the church they did not sufficiently appreciate the courtesies enough to turn off the television set. The husband didn't get out of his chair. They said they were too tired on Sunday morning from a hard week's work to bother about getting up to go to church. Let me make a prediction. Unless that young couple learns to value and appreciate not only their sacred promise made at the baptism of the child but also to value their church life more than slovenly ease on Sunday morning they will never give their child the faith to live on. As the years go by their tastes and values will become shoddy and cheap. No matter how much money they accumulate, they will never be wealthy.

I

What, then, is wealth? Wealth is the capacity to value and appreciate the blessings of life. The Thanksgiving season should not be just another holiday filled with food and football games. It should be the season of appreciation which breeds faith and so makes life rich.

An incident occurred in the life of Jesus as he neared a small town. On the outskirts were the usual hovels inhabited by those who had broken out in skin erruptions. It was the custom in ancient Palestine quickly to quarrantine any who might appear to have incipient leprosy. The contagion of this rotting disease was well known and the people took no chances. Still the ostracism of anyone who had a skin disease of contagion was only temporary if it could be shown that the so-called leprosy cleared up. To do this the potential lepers would have to show themselves to a specially qualified person in the village who was of the priestly order.

When Jesus came there were ten persons in the quarrantined hovel outside the village. These had heard of Jesus' concern for the ill and the healings which faith had brought upon many. They called on him for mercy. It is not hard to believe that he told them to clean themselves up and show themselves to the priest. The ten trooped off, showed themselves to the priest and out of the ten only one came back to Jesus, threw himself at the feet of the Master and — these words are important — "in a loud voice glorified God." Jesus noted that the nine others failed to return. We will never know whether some of them had been turned down or were ungrateful. All we know is one of the ten returned. He was a Samaritan. He was a racially-despised, second-class citizen. Jesus noted that his purpose was to give the thanks and glory to God. So he said: "Arise and go thy way. Thy faith has made thee whole."

The emphasis of this story is not upon anything that Jesus did. The emphasis is upon the one who showed his appreciation and thanks and as a result developed a faith that made him whole. What is even more significant is the man was not a well-trained, cultural member of the community. He was a second-class citizen, an outcast and a Samaritan. But he found the riches of life because of his gratitude and out of his gratitude arose the faith which permitted him to go his way and live. About one out of ten find a hierarchy of values — pay the price of value to gain the riches of faith. And they do it through appreciation. This is the opportunity of the Thanksgiving season.

II

Thankfulness creates value. If it were not that individuals appreciate beauty, convenience, and useful facilities, all plots of land from the Sahara Desert to the center of Milwaukee would have the same price. We know that is not so. Because it is convenient, people congregate in large office buildings. When office buildings are bright and new and handsome, people want to rent them. The value of the building goes up and the land under it is infinitely more valuable.

Should we consider wealth in the terms of mere possession of things, the poorest man would be far wealthier than the ancient princess of Egypt. He possesses electric illumination, pageants and music over television, rapid and luxurious transportation, medical care, food and shelter superior to any in ancient Egypt. So if you are tempted to feel poor, ill-paid and poverty ridden realize that your wealth or poverty is determined primarily by the degree of appreciation which you and your fellows have for blessings. A man is as rich as his thanksgiving expresses. If you want wealth, to feel wealthy, to know riches, start giving thanks. Be the one who returns to give thanks and glorify God, and you will begin to know how much wealth you really have.

However, we do not like to compare ourselves with the ancient princes of Egypt, for we live in a world in which we compare ourselves with other persons today. Therefore we tend to discount the importance of appreciation and fasten our attention upon material things to make us wealthy. The more things we buy, the more power our money gives us, the more dollars in the bank, the more we think we have wealth. It is at this point that many make their mistake. Real wealth is an inner security, joy, influence, the power of which dollars are only a most temporary symbol. For real wealth one must cut through symbols and see real riches. Jesus said, "Lay up treasures in heaven where thieves do not break through and steal."

III

Learn how to distinguish between things — how to consider one thing more valuable than another. Gain a hierarchy of values. This is done through gratitude for blessings. Unless you learn to appreciate the hundred dollars you have in the bank now you will never appreciate the ten million dollars you might have in the bank later. Indeed the money you have in the bank is of no value whatsoever unless you appreciate the nation and the economy under which you live which makes that hundred or million dollars of some value. If you had a million dollars in confederate bills it wouldn't be worth anything. But money is only the symbol of the society in which you live and you can't appreciate the society in which you live unless you contribute to it. Unless you are trying to better your neighborhood, improve your city, help your economy, you won't appreciate it. You are merely trying to exploit and grab more and more to bolster your weak ego. You go around grumping and griping!

I know a young man who has made thousands of dollars. I talk to him over the phone and he agonized over the way in which someone has tried to beat him out of a dollar or the way in which some friend was disloyal, or his brother latched on to him like a parasite, or his wife failed him. A mutual acquaintance and I were talking about him. The mutual acquaintance said, "Poor, poor Bill. He has so much money and he is so poor." Poor Bill buys himself four or five new cars a year. He likes them for a few minutes and then he is agonizing over the way a little squeak or rattle or a bad paint job has gypted him out of his rightful due. Poor, poor Bill has money but no wealth because he hasn't discovered a hierarchy of values. He hasn't realized he is a steward of God and grateful for the opportunity of using what he

ossesses for the betterment of mankind. He never will enjoy Thanksgiving until he learns that life is not dog-eat-dog proposition but a dog-eed-dog proposition. When Bill appreciates this he will be a wealthy man. Then even if he looses all his money he will know a greater wealth which is the love of his fellow man.

WORTH QUOTING

from page 2

o Revelation. It is similiar to the hythmic theme in Ravel's Bolero eveloping with an increasing tempo.

The results of doing right are limitss — peace of mind, happiness, conidence in self. The results of a lower way are discouragement, fear, anxiety. These things I see in people verywhere. And, being human, my wn experience is like all the rest. The practice of right conduct, howver, is not easily nor accidentally chieved. It is the logical result of conscious and studied development f inner disciplines and controls. — V. Carney Hargroves

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It is not bigotry to be certain we re right; but it is bigotry to be unble to imagine how we might posibly have gone wrong.

— G. K. Chesterton

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A reputation once broken may posibly be repaired, but the world will lways keep its eyes on the spot where the crack was.

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There are three things difficult: to eep money, to keep love, to keep rom talking about oneself.

— Marcelene Cox

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Opportunity doesn't knock at the loor . . . She answers when you nock. — Walter L. Hays

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The time has come when we have o face the truth that most of our roblems are fundamentally moral. They mainly emanate from moral compromise, which has bred the confusion in which we now find ourselves. We need change in the human heart to bring clearity into our world, so that we may discover the true purpose of life. This need exists on the individual, national, and international levels.

—N. G. Dimitriou of Cyprus

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The more ideals a man has, the more contemptible is he if the matter ends there, and if there is no courage shown, no privations undergone, no scars contracted in the attempt to get them realized. — William James

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Ever sit in a train standing in the station when another train passes by?

Ever experientce the feeling that your train is moving — the other standing still?

How smooth and easy your train seems to be gliding along — until you glance down at the tracks and suddenly the spell is broken.

It is your train that is standing still, and the other that is moving.

Some people live in that kind of delusion. It is so easy to get the idea that the forward progress is yours, and that the other man is standing still. Then comes the jolting realization that it is the other man who is making the real progress . . . glance down at the tracks once in a while just to be sure which train is moving ahead. — "The Rotary Cog"

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Youngsters relive the history of the human race, and whether they become delinquents or "excellents" depends on how they react to the situations they face . . . This is determined in part by the examples set by their parents . . . "Juvenile excellency" usually is represented in the individual, delinquency in the gang . . . The world is waiting for youth and ex-

pecting it to deliver.
— Elwyn Schwartz

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Before we join the hue and cry and say, "What are youth coming to?" let us humbly look at ourselves and say, "What have we brought them to?" — Ralph W. Sockman

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The open mind has been greatly praised, but somebody once said that an open mind was often a mind with nothing in it. It has also been said that "to understand all is to forgive all," but it is perhaps truer to say that to understand nothing is to forgive everything.—Dorothy Thompson

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It is very hard to be good . . and none of us achieves it. Sin is a reality. One needs an image, an example, a conviction above and beyond human morality by which to measure and gauge behavior, including one's own. "I am not good enough to devise my own ethics," I confessed.
— Dorothy Thompson

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The powers of this world can take no more from a man than his life, and if they take my life, my heavenly Father will give me a new one.
Comment of a Christian minister from Communist Germany.

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Ralph Adams Cram, the late great architect, was wont to say that the exterior of a church should be secondary to its interior. All too often church builders put an imposing front to impress the passerby and then economize by cheapening the furnishings within. But, said Dr. Cram, a church should be like a Christian in that it gets better and richer the farther in you go. — Ralph W. Sockman

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Dr. William Temple, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, writing fifty years after his childhood, once paid a moving tribute to the power of family prayers in his life. "I am constantly thinking," he wrote, "of the enormous difference that it must have made that from a date before we could clearly remember things, we heard some verses of the Bible read every day. Probably three times out of five we did not directly attend to it; but it was flowing over our growing minds, even when attention wandered, and it must have been producing a great effect in making natural and spontaneous that whole outlook upon life which the Bible expresses." — Alan Walker

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Prosperity and success possess a tremendous power to corrupt. So many people have been fine in adversity, only to fall in prosperity. So many nations in history have risen to greatness in days of struggle, only to be undermined and corrupted by the very success and power that their efforts have created. — Alan Walker

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If we are to present an effective witness we must lay a secure foundation in the theological affirmations of the New Testament concerning God, his purpose, and his character; concerning Jesus Christ, his life and work, and significance; concerning man, his nature and destiny.
— Vernon Middleton

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Do not forget that God has put a hero in your soul. We are richly endowed and the hero may slip away, but it can be regained. God's tasks for us might seem impossible to solve, but we muster all the might we are able in order to accomplish that task.
— Charles B. Foelsch

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One day while shopping uptown I noticed a dark, threatening cloud forming on the horizon. As I wanted to get my shoes shined before returning home, I hurriedly entered the nearest shoeshine parlor and climbed into a chair to wait my turn.

When the shoeshine boy came to wait on me, I remarked, "That's a bad-looking cloud in the west, isn't it?"

The small boy rolled his eyes and

id, "Lady, I hadn't noticed it, 'cause ve been so busy shinin'."

— Mrs. B. Toles

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The Christian, however sceptical ncerning the ultimate fate of this orld, is bound because of his hope Christ to remain hopeful within e world. He should never be pes- mistic in the face of the present ternational tension, and never ac- pt the idea that war will come. He ould always expect improvement, stice and freedom, and be ready fight for them; he should never espair when his expectations are t fulfilled, remaining hopeful in all ese provisional concerns because he rooted in an unshakable hope that hrist comes victorious.

— John Deschner

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Sick theology is healed in healing ne world. — Oscar Cullman

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Freedom dies with every individ- al; it is not reborn with his suc- essors; it must always be achieved new, generation by generation.

— Henry M. Wriston

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Man does not take life as he finds . He builds artifical ideals and stand- rds, sets them up as goals to be ttained, tells himself that if he does ot gain these objectives he has failed s a man and so comes to overvalue is ideals. If he can keep his perspec- ive and see these ideals as man-made evices to spur him on to achieve- ent, he will be normal. When he ives them such importance that fail- re to attain them in a specified time, nd in a particular manner, brings uch disappointment that he wants o give up — he has taken his first tep toward an abnormal depression. — John J. B. Morgan in **Keeping a ound Mind** (Macmillan)

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Every phase of your life is affected by imagination. Upon it depend the reach and lift of your mind, your power to look ahead, your ability to recapture the past. Memory, without imagination, is blind, deaf and without the power of making things concrete and tangible. Judgment and reason have little vigor save for the realization which imagination gives. Nor would you have emotional responsiveness but for the influence of imagination. — David Seabury in **Why We Love and Hate** (McGraw-Hill)

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The individual succumbs, but he does not die if he has left something to mankind. — Will Durant

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A wise man can learn from another man's experience, a fool cannot learn even from his own. — Will Durant

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Everything that looks to the future elevates human nature. — Walter S. Landor

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No one is born either honest or dishonest. Honesty is learned. Small children often walk off with another child's toy, tell fantastic tales or disregard the rules of a game. This is not because they are born thieves or liars or cheats. Nor does it mean that they lack some vital organ that makes people honest. No such organ exists in any of us. Young children simply have not yet learned to be honest.

Learning honesty is part of growing up; it is not like learning algebra or swimming or cooking. Honesty can't be learned as a separate skill. It's tied up with everything we say and do — with the way we react toward lost wallets, friends, family, teachers, employers and husband or wife. So we must learn to apply honesty in all these situations. And just as we may grow into certain dishonesties, we can also grow out of them.

— Thaddeus B. Clark

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Honesty can't be maintained if it is constantly undermined by little dishonesties. Honesty with others, honesty with ourselves and honesty about the facts of the universe are not different things. Something for which

we all must strive is a basic attitude and habit of honesty in every one of these areas. — Thaddeus B. Clark

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Life is not a bitter struggle, as some disgruntled persons would have you believe; it is a happy struggle such as you witness in an intense game. Consequently, the attitude of the fighter is much more important than the fact that he continues to fight. — John J. B. Morgan in **Keeping a Sound Mind**

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Everywhere I have sought tranquility and have found it nowhere except in a corner with a book.
— Thomas ã Kempis

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Almost all men improve on acquaintance. — Andre Maurois in **The Art of Living**

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A teacher who can arouse a feeling for one single good action, for one single good poem, accomplishes more than he who fills our memory with rows on rows of natural objects, classified with name and form. — Goethe

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Religion is world loyalty — Alfred North Whitehead

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A friend is the first person who comes in when the whole world has gone out. — Bulwer-Lytton

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Happiness, too, may knock only once. — Marcelene Cox

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The use of the pronoun "I" should decrease as a man matures until finally it is almost absorbed by the pronoun "you." — Marcelene Cox. Ladies' Home Journal — Feb. 1959

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Prayer does not change God, but changes him who prays. — Soren Kierkegaard

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The most precious thing for us is to discover what work tastes like . . . On the one hand we must listen attentively to our desire to get out of a distateful job, but on the other hand we must give the job a chance by forming an intimate relationship with it. — David Riesman

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Every generation laughs at the old fashions but follows religiously the new. — Thoreau

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In a conflict between the individual and the environment, one or the other must yield. — Karl Menninger

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One person with a belief is a social power equal to 99 with only an interest. — John Stuart Mill

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Art is not an end in itself, but a means of addressing humanity. — Modest Moussoksky

* * *

You . . . ask, "must I go to church to accept God?" Before answering that, let me tell you what the great agnostic, Clarence Darrow, told me many years ago. We were coming out of a little chapel he had visited with me, and he turned to me and said, "This comes nearer to making me feel religious than any other place I was ever in."

Why is going to church necessary? Because environment is terribly important to human beings. — James W. Fifield

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When a religion has lost the capacity to stand in prophetic judgment on the institutions of society, both at home and abroad, then it has lost its most significant social function. — Robert E. Fitch

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Communication is the life blood of all personal existence. It is as essential to one's whole being as breathing is to his body. Awareness of this basic human situation has prompted penal officers and outlaws alike to devise solitary confinement as the most rigorous kind of human punishment. All evidence points to the truth that the functional unit of a healthy humanity is not the lone individual but the com-

unity of two or more persons engaged in a variety of expressions of personal communication with each other.

By the same token, the "iron curtain" is a sympton of a most deadly disease. It threatens the very existence of mankind in every generation . . . To be someone is to be in communication with someone else. To be alone, completely alone, is Hell. The problem is fundamentally spiritual, and roots in the failure of communication between our spirits and the Spirit of God. — Allen O. Miller

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In the late 1700's in South Carolina the Presbyterians had to build their little church with an open fireplace. When the Anglican sheriff came along the worshippers could say that they were merely visiting a private dwelling . . . The Reverend William Tennent went to the South Carolina Constitutional Convention and demanded freedom of worship; complete separation of church and state; and he refused to be sweet-talked. He said, "The Law does not change as often as the heart of men; put it into the Law; this is all I want." — Harry Golden

* * *

When you think you can't do a thing, you are apt to be right. It's a confession that you don't trust God, don't have enough faith in Him. And so how can you have the faith that you can win? — James A. Farley

* * *

I couldn't quite. I didn't think God would like it. — Glenn Cunningham

* * *

God has tried again and again to speak to me but I wouldn't listen.
— Oliver Wendell Holmes

* * *

He who is not liberal with what he has, does but deceive himself when he thinks he would be liberal if he had more. — W. S. Plummer

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING from page 2

The second book by a contributor **Sermons in Stories for Children** by Graham R. Hodges. These forty-two sermons" — the word does not seem appropriate — reflect the many facets of the child's mind and interests and reflect also the great biblical messages which help to train the child in the way he should go. The author writes in an appealing manner which possesses empathy and communicability. (Abingdon, 96 pp., $1.75)

Jungle Pilot by Russell T. Hitt is a record of the life and witness of Nate Saint, the inventive genius of Operation Auca, and is an excellent companion volume to **Through Gates of Splendor.** The story, which is told with verve and color, presents an ingenious youth who dedicated his many talents to God in one of the most inspiring adventures in modern missions. (Harper & Brothers, 303 pp., many photographs, $3.75)

Conversion by E. Stanley Jones is a meaningful and persuasive study of the need, character and results of the new birth. Dr. Jones draws from his life-long evangelistic ministry to document this winsome and vigorous book on all aspects of conversion including the biblical witness and the experiences of Christians within the context of twentieth-century life. (Abingdon, 253 pp., $3.25)

Integrity for Tomorrow's Adults by Blanche Carrier is written especially for parents and church leaders who want to know how they can help children to grow morally and spiritually. The book defines the problems which the trainers of children face; analyyzes such subjects as crowd resistance, standing up for the right, and responsibility; and offers considerable guidance. (Thomas Y. Crowell, 182 pp., $3)

PHILLIPS PACKER ELLIOTT
PAUL S. REES
GENE E. BARTLETT

MODERN PILGRIMS GIVE THANKS

THANKS FOR A GOOD GOD

Phillips Packer Elliott, First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, New York

O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good. Psalm 107:1.

This is the day when we give thanks for the gifts which come from God. We are to remind ourselves that back of the gifts there is the Giver. Beyond all gratitude for what He does is our gratitude for what He is. Our text is the doxology used so frequently by the Psalmist, "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good." There is no clearer or more basic way of summing up our gratitude than this.

This may seem an artifical separation. You cannot separate the giver from the gifts. "By their fruits ye shall know them." This applies to trees, to men, and also to God. His gifts are wisely given beyond our own capacity to give, and we can do no better than to be thankful for the gifts He bestows and to assume that the Giver is good. Yet there are times when this is not so clear. Reading back from what happens, we ask whether the Giver really is good. We sing, "All things come of Thee, O Lord," but many things in our experience seem evil. We are not concentrating on these things today, but they are there nonetheless, and to ignore them gives the feeling of unreality which Thanksgiving Day often has. There is great disparity, we feel, between what "comes" from Him, and what we believe He is like. In some circumstances it is not easy to say that "God is good."

Yet this ancient song is on our lips today as it has been on men's lips through the centuries. "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good." We ask how we are to press back to the God who gives, and to be thankful for the fact that He is good. What basis is there for believing in a good God?

I

In the first place, I believe He is good because He is good to me. In the recent play Archibald MacLeish follows the general theme of the Book of Job. One of the early scenes has the family of this successful business man surrounding the Thanksgiving Day table. The wife, Sarah, asks the smallest child why they eat all this food and little Rebecca replies that they eat it because it's good. The mother wants her to realize that it is not only good but that God has sent it to them. She asks her husband if he realizes that, too. He is troubled that she should doubt it and replies quite seriously:

> You ought to think I do.
> Even if no one else should,
> you should.
> Never since I learned to tell
> My shadow from my shirt, not
> once,
> Not for a watch-tick, have I
> doubted
> God was on my side, was good
> to me.

All his success he attributed to the fact that God was with him. God's goodness was measured by the standard of his own progress. God was good because He was "good to me."

This is not as utterly selfish as it first appears. It can, to be sure, mean complete self-absorption, and is, in that respect, dangerous. But it has much validity. The Psalmist might well have said, "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good—to me—to

u." This is the acid test of religion ter all — what God has done for e. Religion is an historic phenom- on; it is of interest to scholars; it ppened "out there." Many people e greatly interested in the study religion. But religion is never real til it enters life, and no matter how formed a person may be in matters church and doctrine, the question timately must be, "Tell us what ur faith means to you and tell us hat God has done for your soul."

Wholesome discipline for Thanks- ving Day is to "count your bless- gs and to name them one by one." his means not only the general kind summing up of good things around , but it means specifically the bless- gs that have come to us. Sometimes e receive a gift that is so utterly ppropriate, so completely in accord ith our need, that we exclaim, "How id he know that I needed this?" So ith God's gifts. They show a direct, ersonal, interested goodness, a nowledge of our needs, a special ncern in our lives. "His eye is on e sparrow and I know he watches e." This stands one in good stead roughout all life. Job, when adver- ty came, could not forget that God as good to him, and he believed e would be still. So as I think of hat God does to meet my needs I give thanks unto the Lord for He good — He is so good to me."

II

In the second place, God is good ntirely apart from my concerns. I el confident of His goodness when am "watching" Him at His work. know He is good as He meets my wn needs and desires. But man is ot the measure of all things, and ere is a broader standard than my eeds or those of any man.

What about His dealing with the ourse of history? What about His aws of the natural and spiritual orld? What are His long-range plans r good? What are the remote reach- s of His benevolence? How good is e beyond my power to judge or measure? What is He doing when I cannot attest to any special way in which He has been good to me?

Here it is that man rests back upon his faith. He cannot see it all, he cannot understand what God is doing everywhere and always. Jehovah replied to Job in the midst of his questioning and complaining, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the world? When the morning stars sang together; and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" You were not there, but the good was going on nonetheless.

So we feel the stability of a good world. We have long felt it in the physical sense. We believe that we live in an utterly reliable natural universe, and that the world, although it is spinning in space, is as solidly rooted as though it were chained to a cosmic Gibraltar. Man had nothing to do with this great good of an orderly world but it is here. We rest upon it and take comfort in it.

So it is with moral and spiritual foundations. They are based upon the good. They may often seem to whirl as the world does on its axis, but the laws hold. "The Law of the Lord is perfect." This is the great affirmation of the Psalmist. "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good" — period. There is no end to His goodness. As though to reinforce his point he goes on to say, "For His mercy endureth forever." Forever is a long time. How does he know that God's goodness will last that long? He will not be here to see and to judge. But he is relying on the utter consistency of God. And so do we. We believe that there will be no break in that front, that there will be no situation where His goodness will fail. We can enter only partially into any aspect of God's nature. We can only grasp a fragment of His wisdom, of His power, or of His goodness. But what we know and feel gives a clue to all the rest. If He is good in the small experiences of life, He will be good in them all.

How constantly we depend upon this fact. In new and difficult and untried situations we reach out, and behold, God is there, and we exclaim with Jacob of old, "Surely God is in this place and I knew it not." His goodness has not been left behind—it has not faded, it is not tired, it is not worn out. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Right down to the end His goodness will be with me. And it will be with those who come after me. The eternal goodness, the everlasting mercy, surrounds us. "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good — He is good forever."

III

Finally, let us see the full measure of His goodness. Just how good is God? One must define goodness for there are wide variations among good men. We often tell the difference between them by the way in which the word "good" is accented, when we say he is a good man. It is here that we turn to the Master and find our help in Him. Jesus gave a new dimension to the good. When our children begin Sunday school and are gathered in their classes, the first verse which they are taught to say is not "God is good" but "God is love." This means not only the sharing of gifts but of life, not only the bestowing of things but the giving of self.

Men thought that they had seen a righteous God before, but they had never seen anything like this. There had never been revealed such goodness as they saw in what Jesus taught them and as He showed them what God was like. A good God is a loving God. You do not see the gifts until and unless you see the spirit in which the gifts are given. "God so loved the world that He gave His own son." That is how good God is. There is no provision for our needs which equals His care for us. He may pour out His bounty to us, but beyond the bounty there is the concern which He shows for us. This is His greatest gift. The sheep have their food given to them by the shepherd and are led out to pasture so that they do not hunger, but this goodness is as nothing compared to that which goes out to find the sheep which is lost and searches for it until it is brought back into the fold. The father may provide shelter and food for his family, but this goodness is as nothing compared to the father standing at the door of his house welcoming and forgiving the prodigal son and saying, "This, my son, was dead and is alive again — he was lost, and is found."

There is danger of making our Thanksgiving observance sub-Christian. Does this day persuade us of God's real goodness? We must not let this be a superficial holiday with no understanding of just how good God is. Beyond the vivid material symbols of plenty, beyond the fields bright with harvest, beyond the overflowing cornucopia, there is the greater gift, there is the awareness of how much the Giver cares for us, there is the love of God as known in Christ.

How appropriate it is then that Thanksgiving should be the doorway to the Advent season. The two belong togetber. We sing and will continue to sing the doxology of the Psalmist, "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good." But to it we add the doxology of the Christian: "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."

MANDATE FOR GRATITUDE

Paul S. Rees, First Covenant Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

And be ye thankful. Colossians 3:15.

According to a medieval legend, two angels were once sent down to earth, one to gather up the petitions of men and women and the other

collect their thanksgivings. The rst angel found petitions everywhere went. He returned to heaven with load of them on his back and a ndle of them in each hand. The cond angel had no such easy time ith his assignment. He had to search lligently and patiently for thanks-vings, and when at length he went ck to heaven he took with him a ere handful.

Legends, of course, can be far-tched and fantastic or they can be ggestively accurate. This one, we all have to agree, is much too ac-rate for comfort.

We are long on our demands, yes, en our complaints; we are short our thanksgivings.

But this we can say: it is no fault the Apostle Paul's. If the world d in it more people possessed of s spirit, there would be no scarcity praise.

Listen to the music of gratitude at plays through this epistle alone:

First chapter, verse 3: "we give anks to God and the Father of our ord Jesus Christ."

First chapter, verse 12: "giving anks unto the Father."

Second chapter, verse 7: "abound-g . . . with thanksgiving."

Third chapter, verse 17: "giving anks unto God and the Father by m" (Christ).

Fourth chapter, verse 2: "Continue prayer, and watch in the same with anksgiving."

Wherever Paul went, he appeared what one of the eloquent prophets lls "the garment of praise." There e some people, you well know, who, they ever wear thankfulness at all, ear it as you do a boutonniere — Mother's Day or at a wedding. But ot Paul! He wore gratitude as a man ears his everyday suit. Praise was oven into the fabric of his life. He anted it to be so with his Christian ethren everywhere. Hence this rong, imperative word of our text: nd be ye thankful."

I

Let's begin by facing it: gratitude is a required grace. Paul does not locate it among the luxuries of the Christian life; he gives it a place among the necessities.

See for yourself what company it keeps among the required rather than the elective course in the college of Christian experience. Going back to verse 12, and using the Phillip translation, here are some commands of the Holy Spirit for you and me as members of the Christian community:

"Be merciful in action, kindly in heart, humble in mind."

Then verse 13: "Be most patient and tolerant with one another, always ready to forgive if you have a difference with anyone."

Verse 14: "Be truly loving, for love is the golden chain of all the virtues."

Then comes the first half of our text-verse: "Let the harmony of God reign in your hearts."

Now, with no change in this imperative mood in which the Apostle is writing, he says, as Phillips has it: "Never forget to be thankful for what God has done for you."

How did so many of us come by the fanciful notion that gratitude is a matter of emotion and inclination? Christian thankfulness is far more a matter of humility and duty.

I owe it to God to be grateful: He has given me my being, my Savior-Christ, and my opportunity to do something with life other than whining about it or flinging it away.

I owe it to others to be thankful: a thankless, melancholy spirit spreads gloom, but a sunny, songful soul spreads a bracing contagion. It was said of that valiant, radiant missionary crusader, Francis Xavier, that if the brothers got discouraged it was sufficient to drive out the demon of depression if only they could go and look in his face.

And then I owe it to myself to be thankful: the meanness and sourness of ingratitude are injurious to good health, whereas thankfulness and

praise have a healing and tonic effect.

Paul knew all of this. Because of it, he did not hesitate to rate thankfulness a required, and not merely a desirable Christian trait.

II

Let's move on and say a second thing about gratitude: it is a reasonable grace. There are two reasons, it sems to me, why we may so describe it.

For one thing, it is reasonable because, on the lower, ordinary levels of life, it is just plain natural for us to feel gratitude. I say "feel" because an instinct of appreciation (often touched, I admit, with selfishness) asserts itself even in young children. In fact to feel gratitude is a much earlier experience than to express gratitude.

Here, for example, is a mother with her six-year-old son walking down the street in front of a church. A gentleman who knows the mother well stops to greet them. He pulls a nickel from his pocket and presents it to the little boy. The child's face lights up and his eyes sparkle with obvious appreciation. Yet no word of thanks crosses the child's lips. This will never do, the mother feels, so she says: "Johnny, say 'thank you' to the nice man." Not only did Johnny fail to respond, but the glow of gratitude went from his countenance and gave way to embarrassment and whimpering and even stubbornness. The lad was silent for no reason of ingratitude but because he was not accustomed to this sort of thing, especially where a stranger was in the act. The feeling was naturally there; the proper articulation of the feeling needed to be learned. For

> Heart, like doors, will open with ease
> To very, very little keys;
> And don't forget that two of these
> Are "I thank you" and "If you please."

But now, if we are going to dig into the more distinctively Christian teaching of Paul on gratitude, we must say a stronger thing. For this Apostle the reasonableness of thanksgiving has a firmer footing than its naturalness can ever give to it. He sees it as an attitude that Jesus Christ forms and fashions within the Christian soul. Thus we hear him say, in verse 17, "Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks unto God and the Father by him," or "through him," as other translations have it.

"Through Him!"

If thankfulness arises through prosperity, well and good. Be sure to express it. But what are you going to do when the prosperity fails? You will then be tempted to feel that you have no reason to offer thanks.

If thankfulness springs up through health, well and good. You cannot be too expressive of your praise. But what will you do when accident maims you or disease makes you bedfast? Must you then become glum or bitter, feeling that you have no reason to sing a song of praise?

But now, supposing it is through our dear Lord Christ that you cultivate the fine art of thanksgiving, then what? The Christ, as Paul shows us in chapter 1, through whom we "have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins?" The Christ through whom "we have peace through the blood of his cross?" The Christ through whom we have been "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom" of the Son of God? The Christ through whom we are "strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness?"

Ah, this is different, isn't it? For if it is in Him and through Him that I am to be a thankful soul, then money in the bank, however useful, does not have me at its mercy: if I lose it, I can still offer thanks. Then physical health, however great a boon, does not have me at its mercy when it pales into disease or suffer

g, I can still be grateful.
A city missionary in London found woman in the last stages of disease a flat so grim and cold that poverty as written all over it. Yet the dying oman managed a faint smile as she id, "I have all I really need: I have hrist!" Hearing which, someone rote:

In the heart of London city,
'Mid the dwelling of the poor,
These bright golden words were uttered,
"I have Christ! What want I more?"

Spoken by a lonely woman,
Dying on a garret floor,
Having not one earthy comfort —
"I have Christ! What want I more?

He who heard them ran to fetch her
Something from the world's great store;
It was needless — died she, saying,
"I have Christ, What want I more?"

Oh, my dear, my fellow-sinner!
High or low, or rich or poor,
Can you say with deep thanksgiving —
"I have Christ, What want I more?"

Make Christ the living fountain of our gratitude, and you will find that he requirement, "Be ye thankful," is ot unreasonable.

III

Following still another lead that ur text gives us, let us say that grati ude is a ripening grace. The full neaning and measure of it does not ome all in an instant. As the scholars requently point out, if we were to ranslate the Apostle's words more literally, we should make the text read, "And become ye thankful." Looking at it this way, we see that what Paul is really saying is this: "Brother Christians, I know you have the flower of gratitude planted in your hearts. But I want you to cultivate it. See to it that it grows."

Earlier in his letter Paul has used a phrase that must have moved them. In chapter 2, verse 7, he speaks of "abounding . . . with thanksgiving." Phillips takes that whole verse and draws it out in modern English thus: "Grow out of Him as a plant grows out of the soil it is planted in, becoming more and more sure of your 'ground,' and your lives will overflow with joy and thankfulness."

I doubt if any one ever really grows up in the business of thanksgiving unless he sees that gratitude is, more than anything else, an inner disposition toward life as a whole. Life has its heights and it has its valleys, its lights and its shadows, its glories and its glooms. That's the way it comes. It has been coming that way for a long time.

It is therefore our responsibility to decide where we are going to lay the emphasis, how we are going to evaluate things. William Park, to illustrate this, said to his students at Northfield, "Two girls gather grapes; one is happy because they have found the grapes and the other is unhappy because the grapes have seeds in them. Two women examine a bush; one is unhappy because it has thorns; the other notices the roses, and is overjoyed with their fragrance." Dr. Park added, "We see exactly what we train ourselves to see in this life."

Here is a man who, having been hale and husky for thirty years, gets a boil on the back of his neck and acts like a bear. You would think the whole universe had turned against him. Here is a woman — an actual case, by the way — who has been invalided and confined to her bed for many years. One day, when a friend came in to see her, she looked up and said, "Oh, I feel so happy and thankful!" When the vistor asked her why, she replied, "Because the

doctor tells me that if I continue to improve, and if the weather stays fine, and if nothing unusual happens, in two weeks I may be turned over and lie on the other side!"

My friends, that comes only from a growing up process in this grace of gratitude. That high quality of thankfulness comes only to someone who has learned that being grateful is not so much a matter of outward beatitude as it is a matter of inward attitude.

IV

And, finally, it should be seen that this required gratitude of which St. Paul speaks is a rewarding grace.

And it is this, I suggest, on three counts:

1. Its exalts God. When man exalts himself, he succeeds only in being little and mean. When he exalts God, such is the paradox of it that he appears at his greatest and best.

That is a devastating word which St. Paul speaks in the opening chapter of Romans where, describing the wilful alienation of original man from God, he says, "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful" (1:21).

Ingratitude is an insult to the Almighty. Thankfulness glorifies Him and, by mysterious reflex action, glorifies man.

2. But also, thanksgiving expels gloom. Look at the verse that follows our text: "Teach and help one another along the right road with your psalms and hymns and Christian songs, singing God's praises with joyful hearts" (v. 16).

Some time ago I saw an intriguing title: "Gloomy Caesar and Happy Jesus.'" in the short article that followed, the author contrasted what we know of Tiberius Caesar, who ruled Rome in A.D. 30, with what we know of Jesus. Of Tiberius, with all his power and pomp and possessions, the historian Pliny wrote: "He is the gloomiest of mankind." But of Jesus we read that, sitting in the shadow of His Cross, He "took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them" (John 22:19). And when it was over, this holy supper, they sang "a hymn and went out" (Mark 14.26).

You and I are not to be the dispensers of Caesar's gloom; we are to be the transmitters of Jesus' joy!

3. And then, surely gratitude encourages graciousness. I like the way the Berkeley version translates the 6th verse of chapter 4: "Let your speech always be gracious." I defy anyone to achieve real graciousness without the conversational gift of saying "Thank you." If that is true at the social level, it is importantly true at the level of our relations with God.

Away then with whimpering! Away with the rasping voice of complaint and the jaundiced eye of fault-finding! Away with the rudeness that can find more things over which to be bitter than of things over which to be praiseful!

Thanksgiving is the politeness of the soul. Its reward may not be a million dollars. Its reward is a gracious spirit — and that's worth more than a million.

THANKFUL ALL THE WAY

Gene E. Bartlett, First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California

There is a common saying that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Yet, someone added a significant change when he said that a little knowledge is not a dangerous thing if you know how little it is!

In smiliar way one might say that a little thankfulness is an unworthy thing. But perhaps the word carries over that a little thankfulness is not unworthy, if we know how little it is.

To help us know this, the writer of the 103rd Psalm gave us one of the most beautiful hymns of thanksgiving

er to come from the heart of a man. is no wonder that its words are own and loved. Listen for the one ord that comes in again and again. less the Lord, O my soul: and all at is within me, bless his holy name. ess the Lord, O my soul, and forget ot all his benefits." What's the key it? Is there a theme that runs rough it? Yes, it is repeated. The gnificant word is **all.** "All that is ithin me, bless his holy name, for- et not all his benefits." Here is an ll-out thankfulness" which makes s realize how little our own grati- de is in comparison. That it may e worthy, let us walk with the Psalm- t for a few moments, following his ought in two ways.

I

First, consider his words, "Forget ot all his benefits." This week as we bserve Thanksgiving throughout merica, in proclamations and pray- rs we will be called to remember hat he has given us food and shelter nd clothing. We will be reminded f the freedoms we enjoy and so often ake for granted. We will be told that He has blessed our nation with pow- r and prestige. All of this we know, ut this is not all there is to know.

For one thing, there are the gifts f His protection. He forgives, heals, nd redeems.

The Psalmist is right, He forgives. Could we possibly go long if we had o place to lay down the burdens of ur guilt and remorse? He heals. Not ust in the dramatic times, but hour y hour and day by day in a hun- lred secret processes of our bodies, God's healing power protects us, even without our knowing or our asking. He redeems. A well known religious eader has put it in a personal expe- ience. In World War I as a young nd frightened soldier on duty he heard a footstep in the dark. With error gripping him he called, "Who goes there? Friend or enemy?" And he word came back bringing a surge f welcome relief, "Friend." Years later as he looked in the dark areas of his life and wondered what it meant, he remembered the incident. In his soul he called out into the darkness of life, "Who goes there? Friend or enemy?" And a still small voice said, "Friend," and his life was saved from destruction.

Moreover, the Psalmist reminds us that there are the gifts of God's provision. "Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." There are the great and timeless gifts far beyond the material things.

Have you ever noticed how a child will cherish little things that seem to us worthless? A little girl I know quite well, not yet a year old, has a basket of favorite things. What an odd collection it is! A clothes pin, just right for biting, an empty can which once held baby powder, a rattle, and of course, a spoon. She finds great enjoyment in these, and smiles a welcome whenever you put the basket before her. But the days are not many when these will satisfy. Soon she will want something else. At the same time, around every child there is something that is lasting. It is the love and the security of her family. All the days of her life she will need and enjoy and find satisfaction in this. The things will change, but the spiritual gifts will remain.

It is so in far deeper ways. Perhaps will the material things we count so important, for which we pour out our energy and our substance, in God's sight must seem as the basket of worthless things cherished by a child. But His love and His surrounding security — these are the great gifts and all the days of our years they will be there. They crown us with loving kindness and tender mercies. They satisfy us with good things — the gifts of His provision indeed. "Forget not all his benefits."

II

But the other side of it is equally important in an all-out Thanksgiving.

"All that is within me bless his holy name." You see, when you count all that God gives, you in turn must give all. One of the great mystics has said, "He asks all, but He gives all in return."

This is the great distinction which will show up at Thanksgiving time. To observe a time of thanksgiving as a passing gesture is easy, indeed. The deeper question is whether all that is within me will be thankful. A husband or wife may make an expression of love at an anniversary, but the real question is what takes place between those times. A parent may honor a child on a birthday and assure him of love, but the real expression will be in the handling of the everyday living situations between parent and child. Or a man may observe the great holidays of his nation, proclaiming with great fervor the meaning of democracy, but the real test is whether he lives in justice, understanding, and free from prejudice in his dealings every day.

This hour of gratitude, in short, can make us aware of a new way of life. It can be for some of us a time of real conversion, a turning around in the whole direction of our lives. There is a simple way by which you can tell whether the hour of thanksgiving holds out to you this option. Let me suggest that for a moment you sentence yourself! By that I mean try to put your way of life in a single sentence. There are many today who would have to say, for example, "I live fearfully." That's the dominant note of your life. You make your decisions in the light of your fear. You find yourself shut in and hampered because fear will not allow you to be free.

Some others would say, "I live aimlessly." You are like a man strolling through the amusement center of a fair. You have no particular purpose. You go here and there in response to any voice that seems to shout most persuasively at the moment.

Again, there are more than we know who would say "I live dully." Life has no zest. Your life was anticipated by Aeschylus who caused Prometheus to say of mankind, "For seeing they saw not, for hearing they understood not, but like shapes in a dream they wrought all their lives in confusion."

If any of these is the sentence of your life, then this Thanksgiving is a time of crucial importance to you. For God is offering an alternative — shall I say commuting your sentence? There is another way for your life now. From this point on the sentence can be, "I live thankfully." It will be a fitting and fruitful way, be sure of it. By the time a man knows enough to be thankful, he is already debtor for the rest of his life. It is a profound and moving motive to seek to return to life some measure of what God has already given to us.

There is a good deal of wisdom in the practical story of a man whose car stalled by the road one day. A passing motorist stopped, took from his car a tow rope and pulled him to the nearest town where he could have his car serviced. The man who had been helped was exceedingly grateful, but the other motorist would accept nothing in return. When the other protested that he would like to do something in return the answer was, "Then get a tow rope and put it in your car for the next time you see someone else who needs it." A practical use for thankfulness!

So, you see the word of the Psalmist is a life-changing word. "All that is within me bless his holy name." It can change your outlook upon things. One physician has what he calls a "thank you cure." It is for those people who show no physical disorder but whose lives are unhappy and fretful. The physician suggests that they deliberately find things for which they can be thankful. It is the beginning of a new outlook on life.

It can give purpose where you have been wandering. For now you have something not only to live by

to live for. You are a debtor. You
t to pay back what you have re-
ed. And strangely, at the same
e, it can help you see more causes
gratitude than you ever saw be-
. When one starts to be thankful,
becomes more aware of the bless-
s for which he can be thankful. If
ay you will re-sentence your life to living thankfully, the hymn will have new meaning:

All the way my Saviour leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who through life has been my Guide?